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SOURCE Morskoy Flot.

FIFTH FIVE-YEAR PLAN FOR
SOVIET MERCHANT FLEET

Numbers in parentheses refer to appended sources. 7

In 1940, 96 percent of all Soviet merchant shipping (in tons) consisted of small coastal shipping, two thirds of which was engaged in petroleum hauling, and one third in hauling dry cargo. After 1940, freight turnover of the merchant fleet increased considerably and many new lines were opened. By 1950, the freight turnover of the fleet had increased 65 percent, as compared to 21 percent for railroad and 26 percent for river hauling.(1)

Indexes of fleet utilization were improved by supplementing the fleet with new modern vessels, mastering the handling of bulk cargoes (coal, ores, etc.), and equipping ports with modern machinery. In 1950, 2.1 times more coal and 2.2 times more ore were handled than in 1940. The pool of transshipping machinery was quadrupled during this period and loading operations became 88.2 percent mechanized, as compared to 65.9 percent in 1940.

Although the 1946 - 1950 Five-Year Plan was not fulfilled, the merchant fleet hauled 65 percent more freight in 1950 than in 1940; in the Far East 2.5 times more freight was hauled in 1950 than in 1940. Productivity per ton of freight-carrying capacity increased to 45.4 ton-miles, an increase of 81 percent over 1940. Other hauling indexes also improved:

Index	Unit	1940	1946	1950
Average ship speed	% of 1940	100	101.7	109.1
Utilization of freight-carrying capacity	%	49.3	49	59.7
Time en route	%	28.1	27.5	39.5
Norms for freighting operations	% of 1940	100	60.4	140 (2)

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During the Fifth Five-Year Plan, freight turnover of the merchant fleet is to increase 55-60 percent, as compared to 35-40 percent for rail transport. (1) This increase is to be accomplished not only by additional planned capital investment in the fleet, ports, and ship-repair plants, but primarily by sharply improving all operational indexes, increasing indexes of fleet productivity and ship turnaround, and eliminating unproductive ship layover. Qualified personnel to carry out these improvements are available in all branches of the merchant fleet.

In 1951, vessels of the Ministry of Merchant Fleet utilized only 59.4 percent of their freight-carrying capacity, and 20.3 percent of all vessel trips were made in ballast.

By 1955, vessels of the dry-cargo fleet are to perform 54 ton-miles per ton of freight-carrying capacity in 24 hours; the petroleum fleet, 83 ton-miles. This represents an increase of 19 percent over 1950 for the dry-cargo fleet, 21 percent for the petroleum fleet. These gains are not great in comparison to those made in the 1940 - 1950 period when fleet productivity of the dry-cargo fleet was increased 120 percent, mainly because of improved indexes of ship utilization. (2)

Production of freighters and tankers for the merchant fleet is to be increased nearly 2.9 times during the 1951 - 1956 Five-Year Plan, tonnage of the Soviet commercial fleet is to be increased considerably, and shipbuilding facilities are to be expanded by the expansion and construction of shipbuilding and ship-repair plants. The plan provides for the expansion and reconstruction of the ports of Leningrad, Odessa, Zhdanov, Novorossiysk, Makhachkala, Murmansk, Nar'yan Mar, and Far East maritime ports and for the further development of maritime transport in the Baltic republics. The ports of Riga and Klypeda will be expanded. Altogether, the traffic capacity of Soviet maritime ports will be nearly doubled. (1) By 1955, ports are to be 94 percent mechanized; ships of the dry-cargo fleet are to spend 40.5 percent less time in ports, and petroleum carriers, 12.5 percent less. The need to improve port facilities is shown by the fact that layover of dry-cargo vessels in ports amounts to 58 percent of their entire operating time. For example, in the first 9 months of 1952, the unproductive time spent in ports amounted to 23 percent for the dry-cargo fleet and 21.5 percent for the petroleum fleet. Both fleets had shown a 75-percent improvement in this index during the 1946 - 1950 Five-Year Plan.

At present, ships spend 25 percent of their entire operating time undergoing repair. Ships average 90 to 100 days undergoing repair while 30-40 days would suffice. To cut down this time, the capacity of ship-repair enterprises is to be nearly doubled during the 1951 - 1956 Five-Year Plan. (2)

SOURCES

1. Moscow, Morskoy Flot, No 11, Nov 52
2. Ibid., No 12, Dec 52

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